

Behaviour Management Training

A number of school boards are offering behavioural management training to its staff. Prior to engaging in this type of training, ETFO members need to know more about these programs as well as understand their rights regarding participation.

The following programs are the most commonly offered by school boards:

- **Crisis Prevention Intervention (CPI)**

This program has a focus on prevention and strategies designed to “safely defuse anxious, hostile or violent behaviour at the earliest possible stage.” “Disengagement skills” are demonstrated and practiced to train workers to remove themselves and others from dangerous situations. Participants are trained to recognize when it is appropriate to physically intervene and implement holding skills to manage aggressive behaviour.

- **Behaviour Management Systems (BMS)**

This program stresses early prevention and intervention techniques. It aims to teach effective and safe physical intervention techniques.

The BMS training framework is made up of four phases, one of which is the “Action Phase.” During the action phase, practitioners can “intervene physically” through a series of blocks or releases or by containing the student (i.e., by wrapping “your arms around the student”). There are four written cautions in the workbook specific to containments that mention “positional asphyxiation” and students incurring “a dislocated shoulder.”

Physical Components of Behaviour Management Training

It is ETFO’s position that members have the right to decide whether they wish to participate in the physical action component of training programs such as BMS. Members may not be comfortable with the physical training component for a number of reasons. ETFO supports a member’s right to decide this.

Physical Interactions with Students and The Use of Behaviour Management Training

ETFO has consistently discouraged members from physically intervening with students since engaging in physical contact puts members in jeopardy of personal injury, possibly injuring a student and/or facing discipline resulting from allegations of abuse.

Using the physical components taught in BMS and CPI could potentially put members in a precarious situation where they could face discipline for using restraint techniques or using excessive force to restrain a student. This could lead to a possible investigation by police, Children's Aid Society and/or the Ontario College of Teachers or the College of Early Childhood Educators. Another possible scenario is that members could face discipline if they take the training but opt not to use physical restraints in a particular behaviour management situation.

ETFO believes that behaviour management training should be voluntary. In situations where a member volunteers to take the training, or the training is occurring during the instructional day, the Federation offers the following advice:

- Members are required to attend behaviour management training during the instructional day or Professional Activity (PA) day if they have been asked or are scheduled to do so;
- Before participating in any physical training, members are entitled to and should have a full understanding of the physical activity involved in the interactive phase of the training;
- If a member is not comfortable with the physical activity for medical or other reasons, they should notify the trainer and request an accommodation. Should this occur and the training is during the instructional day at the request of the employer, the member is required to stay and observe that portion of the training but elect not to participate in the physical activity; and
- Members are not required to, nor should they sign a waiver, in respect of the training and they should advise their local immediately if they are asked to do so.

For further information, please contact your local ETFO president or Professional Relations staff in Professional Relations Services at 416-962-3836 or 1-888-838-3836.

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